



REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action of July 23, 1997. Applicants have amended claims 1, 11, and 26, and added claims 46-56. Claims 14-25 and 34-45 are withdrawn from consideration. Applicants request the reexamination and reconsideration of pending claims 1-13, 26-33, and 46-56.

Before turning to the rejections, it may help to consider some of the features of the invention. In one embodiment, the invention provides an apparatus for adjusting tension on a heating filament array used in a reactor. One embodiment includes (i) a first electrode; (ii) a movable electrode spaced from the first electrode, wherein the movable electrode is adapted to pivot about a line intersecting and perpendicular to the movable electrode; (iii) a heating filament array attached to the first electrode and to the movable electrode; (iv) an assembly, attached to the movable electrode, adapted to pivot about the line; and (v) a force regulator coupled to the assembly to apply tension to the heating filaments. In another feature, the assembly comprises a cantilever which pivots about the line so that the movable electrode will assume a position that is not "square" with the first electrode, which may be fixed, in order to apply tension to the heating filament array.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-5, 10-11, 13, 26-27, 29, and 30-31 under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,970,986 to Anthony (Anthony). Because Anthony fails to describe a heating filament array attached to a movable electrode adapted to pivot about a line intersecting and perpendicular to the movable electrode, Anthony does not anticipate amended claim 1. Further, the prior art fails to suggest this feature, therefore it would have been nonobvious to arrive at the subject matter of amended claim 1. Claims 2-5, 10-11, 13, 26-27, 29, and 30-31 distinguish over Anthony in similar manner.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 6, 28, and 31 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Anthony. Claims 6, 28 and 31 are allowable based on their dependency on claim 1 and claim 26, respectively.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claim 7 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Anthony, U.S. Patent No. 3,670,066 to Valyi, U.S. Patent No. 3,659,767 to Martin, or U.S. Patent No. 3,825,129 to Beck. The Examiner asserts each reference makes clear that in the force regulator art an actuated cylinder can be used as a functional equivalent of a spring. Claim 7 is allowable based on its dependency on claim 1.

Finally, the Examiner states claims 8-9, 12, 30, and 32 are objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claims 46-50 correspond to old claims 8-9, 12, 30, and 32. New claims 52-56 describe other features of the invention.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required fee and to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-2415 (Attorney Docket No 13880-703). A duplicate copy of this paper is enclosed. If an interview will expedite the progress of the application, please call 650-493-9300 from 9 am to 7 pm (PDT). If you cannot reach me, please leave a message at my extension no. 4636.

Respectfully submitted,
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